

# WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,  
and workers in the District of Columbia*

*Friday, March 5, 2004*

## DC BREAKS GROUND ON NEW UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

Chief Ramsey this week joined Mayor Williams and other local leaders in a ceremonial groundbreaking for DC's new Unified Communications Center (UCC), to be located on the East Campus of St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Southeast. The UCC combines into one secure facility the District's critical communications functions. The UCC will serve as the call-taking and dispatch center for police and fire emergency (9-1-1) and non-emergency (3-1-1) calls; the Mayor's Call Center (727-1000); the Mayor's Emergency Command Center, the Emergency Management Agency and the Regional Incident Command and Control Center (RICCC). When complete in 2005, the UCC will be the District's communication, emergency management and technology hub and one of the nation's premier large integrated call centers and public safety/emergency response facilities. The UCC will also bring new jobs and amenities to Ward 8, east of the Anacostia River. The center is part of the Mayor's Government Centers initiative, which locates government facilities in neighborhoods to bring services close to citizens and to support community revitalization and economic development. Once the UCC is completed, the District's current Public Safety Communications Center, located on McMillan Drive, NW, will be converted into a backup and training facility.

① For more information about the project, visit the UCC website at:

[www.ucc.dc.gov](http://www.ucc.dc.gov)

① For more information about 9-1-1 and 3-1-1 in DC—including tips on when to use the non-emergency number—go to:

<http://www.mpdc.dc.gov/info/phone/phone.shtml>

## CHIEF UPDATES DC COUNCIL ON THE MPDC'S PERFORMANCE DURING FISCAL YEAR 2003 AND FY 2004 TO DATE

In testimony this week before the DC Council's Committee on the Judiciary, Chief Ramsey outlined the MPDC's performance in several critical areas during fiscal year 2003 and the first five months of fiscal 2004. In the area of crime fighting and visibility, the Chief reported increases in officer activity—police recovered almost 2,000 firearms in calendar 2003, for example. He also described a number of initiatives, including last fall's Crime Initiative, the Gang Intervention Partnership, the "block survey" program in which officers knock on doors in a specific block, "Operation Fight Back" which targets quality-of-life issues, enforcement of DC's anti-loitering/drug free zone law, and a new "hot spot" enforcement initiative targeting 14 high-crime areas across the city. The Chief also discussed improvements in 9-1-1 service, including reductions in both call-answer times and the number of "dropped" calls. Ramsey cited last year's hiring of 59 civilian professional call-takers as key to the performance improvements. Ramsey reported that MPDC's homicide clearance rate had improved from 55 percent in calendar 2002 to 60 percent in 2003, and that the creation of a new Family Liaison Specialist Unit had improved the Department's services to the survivors of homicide victims. Finally, Chief Ramsey discussed various management and accountability issues, including reductions in overtime spending, stepped-up recruiting and hiring, and the continuing problem of officers on extended sick leave and limited duty. The Chief outlined a number of reforms that the MPDC is instituting to address the problem, including several measures to reduce the number of officers on stress-related leave.

① Read Chief Ramsey's testimony before the Committee at:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/stmts/2004/03/030104.shtml>

## COALITION SUCCEEDS IN PRESERVING DC GUN LAW

Following a quick and broad-based mobilization, a coalition of DC leaders succeeded this past week in beating back efforts in the US Senate to repeal DC's longtime ban on handgun ownership and possession. Organized by Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, the coalition included Mayor Williams, Chief Ramsey, local business leaders, and organizations representing the survivors of homicide victims. They pressed their case for retaining DC's tough gun laws during a news conference at MPDC headquarters and visits to Senators on Capitol Hill. Norton credited the direct appeals by Marita Michael, whose 16-year-old son, Devin Fowlkes, was shot last October by a 15-year-old child in front of Anacostia High School, and Kenneth Barnes, whose son, Kenneth Barnes Jr., was shot by an 18-year-old at his U Street business. Norton took both of the residents on an unscheduled visit to the office of Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, whose name had been put on the bill for possible introduction. Senators had considered attaching the repeal of DC's handgun ban to S. 1805, a bill that would have limited the legal liability of gun manufacturers, distributors and dealers when a firearm is used in a crime. The DC repeal amendment was never brought to the Senator floor, and S. 1805 was eventually defeated.

- ① For more information on the actions to protect the District's handgun ban, go to:  
<http://www.norton.house.gov/issues2.cfm?id=8007>
- ① Details on DC's gun laws, as well as gun safety tips for parents and children, can be found at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/family/gunsafety.shtm>

## POLICE INVESTIGATE ATTEMPTED ABDUCTION OUTSIDE DUNBAR HIGH

The MPDC is seeking the public's assistance in identifying and locating a suspect who attempted to abduct a teenage female. On Thursday, February 26, 2004, at 4 pm, a female Dunbar Senior High School student reportedly was in the 1300 block of New Jersey Avenue, NW, when she observed a suspect operating a silver-colored automobile. The suspect drove slowly around the block several times before parking the vehicle, at which time he approached the female on foot. The suspect grabbed one of the female's hands and asked if he could talk to her. Against her protests, the suspect held onto her hand and attempted to pull her toward his car. The female broke free of the suspect's grasp and fled back to the school. The suspect is described as a freckled-faced white male in his early 20s, 6 feet tall, with a slim build, short dark hair and dark eyes. He was wearing a gray hooded sweatshirt and dirty blue jeans, and was operating a silver-colored late model sedan, possibly a Volvo. A reward of up to \$1,000 is being offered for information leading to an arrest or indictment.

- ① Read the news release at:  
<http://www.mpdc.org/blue/news.asp?sid=2592>
- ① The reward in this case is being offered through the Crime Solvers program. Learn more at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/serv/solvers/aboutcrimesolvers.shtm>
- ① The MPDC has a number of "Street Smarts" safety tips, available at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/street/street.shtm>

## NEWS & NOTES

**New Sergeants Promoted.** Twenty-one newly promoted sergeants were sworn in by Chief Ramsey this past week during promotional ceremonies in Northwest. All of the new sergeants are being assigned to the seven police districts, where they will provide first-line supervision of neighborhood policing efforts.

**Stationary Photo Radar Camera.** Residents are reminded that the MPDC has activated a stationary photo radar speeding reduction camera—the first such camera in North America—in the 600 block of Florida Avenue, NE. As part of a 30-day public education period, the camera will generate warning notices only through March 27, with actual speeding citations beginning on March 28. Details at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2589>.

**DC Named "Bicycle-Friendly" City.** The League of American Bicyclists has named DC a Bicycle-Friendly Community for its commitments to bicycling. DC was cited for its physical environment, education and enforcement efforts to support bicycling. Details at <http://dc.gov/news/release.asp?id=572>.

**Drug Free Zones.** The MPDC is enforcing DC's anti-loitering law this weekend in designated drug free zones in PSAs 111 and 702 in Southeast, and PSA 302 in Northwest. Additional drug free zones are planned for the coming weeks. Details on this program at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/comm/drugfreezone.shtm>.

## DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 3/5/04)
• 2004: 31
• 2003: 38
• % Change: -18.4%
• Closure Rate: 67.7% (21 closures)
Adult Arrests (week end. 2/28/04)
• Total: 980
• Drugs: 184
• Homicide: 1
• Motor Vehicle Theft: 20
• Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 66
Firearm Recoveries (as of 3/2/04)
• March: 26
• February: 185
• 2004 Total: 411
Traffic Fatalities (as of 3/5/04)
• 2004: 7
• 2003: 7
• % Change: Unchanged

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at [kevin.morison@dc.gov](mailto:kevin.morison@dc.gov). Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

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